

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
City Hall, 11th Floor
Park Conference Room
455 N. Main
March 10, 2014
3pm**

Present: Bryan Frye, Hoyt Hillman, Cindy Claycomb, Tom Roth, Ron Allen, Chris Highfill

Absent: Steve Hieger

Also Present: Doug Kupper, Director of Park and Recreation, Elizabeth Harlenske, City Assistant Attorney, Christina Butler, Clerk, Eric Cale, Raoul Cortez, Jack Kellogg, Sally Buck, Dean Bradley, Clark Bastian, Clay Bastian, Chris Goebel, Max Ogden, Phil Meyer, Citizens.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 3:00pm.

Frye introduced Chris Highfill as the newest member of the Board of Park Commissioners. He was appointed by the Mayor as the "At Large" member of the Board.

PUBLIC AGENDA

None.

REGULAR AGENDA

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

Motion by Frye, second by Roth, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve, sign and file minutes of the February 10, 2014, Board of Park Commissioners Regular Meeting (6-0).

Item 2A: KS Gas Service Request at Columbine and Clapp (John Philbrick)

Kupper stated that this was an easement request at Columbine Park area and Clapp Golf Course and introduced John Philbrick.

John Philbrick stated that KS Gas has to replace a deep well because the EPA is telling them they have to go to a different system. They are looking at these two areas and it is the most logical way to do it. They have asked about this and have agreed to remove and/or abandon the current system. If the Board wants to develop these areas later, KS Gas would have to move and allow the development to take place. They wanted to see if the Park Board would agree to a permit with no cash involved and just enter into an agreement with them.

Hillman asked if any work had begun on Mt. Vernon for this project.

Philbrick stated there are probably flags posted in the areas to be able to draw it, but no formal work has started on this.

Claycomb asked for the location of the request.

Frye responded that it is northwest of 21st Street and Amidon. He asked if these would be temporary.

Philbrick responded that these would be permanent.

Kupper confirmed that these would be permanent, but if the Park Board wanted to do any development later, KS Gas would have to move it at their expense.

Frye asked if this will be underground.

Kupper responded yes and that it will not show at all above ground.

Frye asked how long would it take.

Kupper responded that it would not take long and at Clapp Golf Course it is out of the main play area and would not impact play.

Claycomb asked if this would overlap with the previous inquiry at Clapp.

Kupper responded no.

Frye asked if there were questions from the public and there were none. He noted that this is different than what has been done in the past and asked if Kupper was comfortable with the request.

Kupper responded yes.

Motion by Frye, second by Claycomb, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO approve the request as presented by staff (6-0).

Philbrick stated he would prepare the agreement for signature.

Frye asked if it would be completed by next month.

Philbrick stated he could possibly have it done by the end of the week.

Item 2B: Proposed Improvements/Usage Agreement for Heritage Square Park (Eric Cale)

Kupper stated that the area in question is behind the Historical Museum. He noted that it is mostly hardscape with a water feature, art, and a gazebo. It is heavily used by folks that may or may not have homes of their own. He noted that the Park Department has removed the gazebo from the rentable facilities due to not being able to guarantee the cleanliness of the area. It is a nice, open space downtown. He introduced Eric Cale as the Executive Director of the Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum.

Eric Cale stated that the Historical Museum preserves Sedgwick County history and was organized in 1939 in the original City Hall building. It is a non-profit 501c3 with a volunteer board of 25 members. Heritage Square Park was designed as a compliment to the museum and was funded by the Junior League of Wichita. This park is currently underutilized and the proposal follows the precedent set by Botanica near Sim Park. The Historical Museum is asking the Park Board to consider granting the museum building a lease of the park which would be an extension of the museum and its building. They

could expand the park's public use through exhibits in the park, programming, and special events – both public and private. Access would be administered by the museum and open to the public six days a week with paid admission through the museum. They would like to secure the area with a fence between the parking garage, Fidelity Bank building and the museum building with gates for special use for insurance reasons and to protect the exhibits. The area along the exterior of the fencing off of Williams Street would still be public space. The Main Street gate near the Carnegie Library would be gated, but would still allow truck access. Funding for the project would be estimated at \$200,000 to secure the park, make improvements and adapt the building as an entrance to the park. They have received \$100,000 pledged (\$40,000 in kind donations and \$60,000 cash). The annual maintenance is estimated to be approximately \$10,000. The time line would be approximately 9-12 months and would be concurrent with the parking garage renovation.

Claycomb asked if there is a concern that those who hang out in the public space on William and Main might still hang out there.

Cale responded that they may still have loitering, but it would not be as much.

Frye noted that the River Festival has used that area in the past and asked if the Festival would have to negotiate with them.

Kupper responded yes. He noted that part of the plan is to be open during daylight hours.

Frye stated he was thankful for the opportunity and appeared to be a good partnership for the public facility without having to tap into the Park Department's meager reserves. He stated that he was concerned that this is the first the Board is hearing of it and would like to allow the public to hear about it. He also noted he would like to talk with the police homeless team about the potential impact. He stated he wanted to make sure people know what the Board is talking about since the area will be secured and not as open to the public, so he would like to defer. He wants to make sure the Board is doing the right thing for all of the community.

Harlenske asked if the Board is agreeable to giving them control of the park.

Frye responded that it would still be the Board's park.

Harlenske stated that it is a City asset and this proposal would limit public use of the property, therefore they should have public input.

Motion by Frye, second by Claycomb, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO instruct staff to review the option and put together the best lease agreement that satisfies all of the legal concerns and is good for the partnership (6-0).

Claycomb asked what the current lease is.

Cale stated it renews annually with a \$1 annual charge and was originally signed in 1977.

Item 3A: Swanson Park – Ogden Additional Utility Easement Request

Kupper stated that the area in question is on the City's west side between Central and 13th Streets on the west side of Maize. The area has been sub-divided into three lots and they need to add water and

sewers for the homes. There was a water utility easement in there and they are talking about abandoning it and getting a public easement for the new water and sewer lines.

Chris Goebel (153 S Gleneagles) stated that he is the contract purchaser of Parcel A which is the lower lot. The trees have grown up in the neighbor's yard in the middle of the lot. This subdivision was originally part of the Swanson homestead and Swanson Park became part of this. In 2009 the single lot subdivision was divided into three parcels and two reserves. Both reserves have restricted uses. The sewer plan when the lots split was for Parcel C to go over the easement. Upon review they discovered a 42" pipe that they would need to clear. They are not allowed to put in a shared service line and they cannot put in that long of a pipe in there. They received a letter from Mr. Kupper suggesting they stay in the same easement. Goebel stated he would if it weren't for the trees. He stated he was asking for approval of the relocation of the easement and they are asking for a public easement instead of a private one. They are trading one 20' for another 20' and will vacate the existing easement once this is done. Phil Meyer from Baughman is the engineer.

Hillman asked if there would be a manhole in the park.

Goebel responded yes because the pipe cannot be bent.

Hillman asked what the depth would be for the yellow line.

Meyer responded it would be in the 8' range coming out of the property and not as deep as they want to be.

Frye asked if there were comments from the Board or the public and there were none. He thanked Goebel and his associates for working with them on this. He stated that the park is a natural reserve and they would be limiting the loss of trees.

Kupper thanked Goebel for working it out with the Board.

Motion by Frye, second by Hillman, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO approve the vacation of the current easement and approve the new location of the new easement and the manhole on park property (6-0).

Item 3B: Watson Park Master Plan Presentation (Elizabeth Goltry)

Frye stated that the Watson Park Proposed Master Plan had been presented to the DAB meetings. He noted that the steering committee did a great job and it was exciting. He introduced Elizabeth Goltry as the Project Manager.

Goltry stated that the steering committee has been presenting the Watson Park Master Plan to the DAB meetings. Currently Watson Park is at 50% cost recovery and the goal is to be 100% cost recovered by the end of 2015. They have increased awareness of Watson Park and have a citizen steering committee. There were also community meetings held in December and January with a project team of four staff members. They had a December meeting and used online survey questions for citizens to pick their top five preferred programs for the Park. Citizens picked the "Train" as the #1 item which will cost approximately \$130,000 to repair. The second and third items were "Concerts in the Park" and "Farmers' Market". There was a tie for the fourth item which was "Children's Pony Rides" and "Zip Line or Challenge Course". They also took open ended suggestions which included improve cleanliness, update restrooms and update the park as a whole. There are changes already in progress such as the

programming of the shelters. In previous seasons, people could pick their own rental times. This has been adjusted to attain maximum usage of the shelters. They are also focusing on maintenance and volunteering. The vision is for the park to be a regional destination for community gatherings and outdoor fun. The Steering Committee put potential capital improvement projects into groups that totaled close to \$300,000 and asked citizens to rank them by priorities. The train improvements include the purchase of a new one and adding two additional coaches. A 20' gazebo or structure for weddings and special events was requested as well as updating electrical systems at some shelters. They would also like to add small shelters, install more picnic tables, and add pedestrian linkages throughout the park. Island improvements were also suggested including cleaning it up and installing a zip line. Replacing the mini golf course to be ADA compliant is estimated to cost \$300,000. Regarding community facilities, they would like to replace shelter #6 and the restroom in the central area of park so it could potentially replace the loss of the Aley Community Facility which was lost due to fire damage. They would also like to move the campfire out of the hidden area in the northern part of the park. There was also a suggestion for a carousel. They would also like to improve signage for amenities in the park, relocate a playground closer to a shelter for rentals. Goltry thought they might be back in April or May with a document for the Board to review.

Frye commented on the McLean street entrance to the park and noted that some had suggested a secondary bus entrance on the north end of the park or on the original east side entrance of the park.

Goltry stated that busses use the old Lawrence Road entrance on the east side of the park.

Frye noted that there are no current CIP dollars in the current plan and the total for the project is estimated to be \$4-5 million.

Goltry noted that there are two more steering committee meetings planned and then they will come back to the Board.

Frye stated that Watson Park will celebrate its 50 year anniversary next year. He noted there have been great ideas offered with lots of community involvement.

Item 4A: Recreation Update

Kupper stated that they had changed to distributing four guides instead of three because combining the Winter and Spring Guides messed up the sessions. The Division had requested that the budget office have additional funding for the four guides. This way it is broken out by seasons and works better for customers. He noted there is marketing research for how many municipalities have gone to pure electronic marketing of the guides and how many have gone back to paper guides.

Claycomb asked if the numbers reported on the Recreation report include the culinary classes from Butler Community College.

Kupper responded no, and that only the classes that are taught by the chefs of BCC for the recreation center are included.

Hillman stated that the zip code 67060 area and the south side of Wichita are basically undeveloped and he would like to look at river access down there. His councilman had expressed interest in this for his constituents.

Frye noted that this is outside the city limits. Frye asked if they could get a breakdown of Recreation participants from inside the city limits versus outside the city limits.

Claycomb asked if some participants will be counted twice if they registered for two programs.

Kupper noted that is most likely.

Frye asked what could be done with this information.

Kupper stated he thought it was a good indication that Recreation is drawing people from outside of the city limits to participate in activities and classes.

Kupper added that the Linwood fitness center is scheduled to be open soon.

Kupper stated that they had initiated CIP funds for painting/caulking the pools. They had also received approval to apply for a grant for Watson Park for ADA accessibility.

Item 4B: Golf Update (Troy Hendricks)

Kupper stated that weather had again affected rounds with a 17% loss for January/February 2014 compared to 2013. He stated they are getting ready to start seasonal part time staff. They are working on volunteer marshals for pace of play and working out a process by which volunteers can score free golf if they work as marshals. Other courses use volunteer marshals.

Frye asked about the construction and capital projects.

Kupper responded that they are waiting for temperatures to stabilize for the parking lot repaving and resurfacing of Clapp.

Frye noted that weather is the biggest driver in the golf business.

Kupper stated that numbers nationally had a loss of 17% and the City golf courses are only at a 13% loss. Marketing packages and discounts are helping to beat the odds.

Frye asked about the status of the golf fee increase going before City Council.

Kupper responded that he hopes to have it at one of the April City Council meetings.

Claycomb asked about the Golf Division Manager position.

Kupper stated they are on round three of interviews and the next round would take place on March 28.

Claycomb asked if they are making the debt service payments.

Kupper responded that they had made all of them including the debt service and the principal payment from last year.

Allen asked about the seasonal positions and what types of positions they are hiring for the summer.

Kupper responded that they have to have golf cart staff, concession staff, marshalling, and pro shop

staff.

Item 4C: Updates from Director and President

Kupper stated they had to postpone the start of the soccer new program.

Frye stated that Lisa Klaassen and Matt Martinez had received their CPRP certification and were recognized at the most recent City Council meeting. Also the Hook a Kid on Golf organization recognized the local organization and Mark Lowry for their work on this program.

Kupper stated he would like to bring an update on the Buffalo Park design to the April or May Board meeting.

Frye asked about reviewing the capital plan.

Kupper responded they could try to go over the plan in April.

Frye stated the Board could update its priorities and look further down the line.

Kupper stated that the Historic Museum proposal will be on the April agenda.

Frye noted that since there is now a full board, they need to establish a nominating committee for elections.

Kupper stated they can set May for the elections.

Frye stated he would like to establish April for the nominating committee and put it on the agenda.

Kupper stated that Delano and River Vista may be back on the April agenda as well.

Kupper stated that annually the Park and Recreation Department holds the Night With Santa in conjunction with the Mayor's Lighting of the Christmas Tree. There is talk about doing a week-long holiday festival with Waterwalk from the Delano District through the Old Town District. There was a preliminary meeting with all players of that group. The media has been receptive to the idea. The Lights on the River folks were there and were enthusiastic about the idea. The holiday festival would kick off on the Friday after Thanksgiving with the tree lighting and Illuminations. Saturday could be the Lights on the River. And Night With Santa could still be on Tuesday. The week could possibly culminate with a parade on Saturday. They are still working on details, but are very excited about it.

Item 5: Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.

Bryan Frye, President

Christina Butler, Clerk